

VICTORIA

British Columbia



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AUTHOR:

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VICTORIA



ALEX. H. SUTHERLAND



The Harbour

VICTORIA

Draped in her mantle of green and brown,
Queen of her spacious bays,
Unheeding the swift world's tragic frown,
The slow-eyed, leisurely, lovable town
Clings to her ancient ways.

A flame of gold sweeps over the sky
Where the wild Olympics range,
Their craggy crests, upreared on high,
Through tireless centuries defy
The challenge of time and change.

A sheen of silver is on the seas
In the light of the rising moon.
Beneath the quaint arbutus trees
We sip the scent of the salt-sea breeze,
'Til darkness comes too soon.

Go forth ye bargainers of the mart,
Ye truckers of trade and gain.
Your greed is a pitiful thing apart.
Here in the calm of the world's great heart
Is a wealth ye may not obtain.

GORSE AND BROOM

Gold on the skirts of the winding road,
Gold on the uplands fair,
Gold in the gorge's dark abode,
Pure gold everywhere.

The land is as rich as a miser's dream,
In a fabulous wealth untold,
And even the faintest sunlit beam
Is speckled with shining gold.

For a Midas has touched with his finger tips
Each flowering bud and tree,
And has tinted their delicate fairy lips
In an opulent fantasy.

Afar on the rocky mountain bare,
And down in the marshes wide,
Deep where the sweet blue grasses are,
And close by the rock-bound tide

They wander, the zealots of laughing Spring,
A rich-robed, riotous band.
In orange and yellow and gold they fling
A spell on the drowsy land.

BEAUTEOUS VICTORIA

Fate and the fortunes of a considerate world have finally retired us into one of the most delightful localities in Canada, Victoria, the capital city of the Province of British Columbia, at the southerly extremity of picturesque Vancouver Island.

One time a British naval and military post, with memories reaching back to the days of Sir Francis Drake, Juan de Fuca and Captain Vancouver, the early town was largely composed of descendants of army and navy officers or Hudson's Bay Company factors. The equable climate and the magnificence of the scenery could not, however, fail to attract the attention of travellers from distant lands, until the city has now become the Mecca for successful retired business and professional men from every quarter of the globe, with a natural preponderance of Canadians, Englishmen and Americans. It is, in fact, the only city in Canada suited to persons of that class.

What advantage would there be in retiring from work and remaining in such throbbing commercial cities as Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg or Vancouver, where your associates are busily engaged at their occupations from nine a.m. to five p.m. daily? You simply could find no congenial soul with whom to fraternize.

Here, however, the very reverse is the situation, and on a half-hour's notice, you can gather together any number of friends eager to join you in any form of recreation offering, be it yachting, golfing, trolling for salmon or trout, tennis, sea-bathing, motoring, picnicing, or any other form of sport, which is regarded as one of the serious occupations of life, to end up as a matter of course at the opera or the enjoyment of dancing or bridge over the evening hours.

Naturally a city composed largely of successful,

well-informed, retired persons, takes on a certain literary flavor, as the business man, who has all his life longed for leisure reading hours, is not to be denied his hardly-earned privilege, so that, at any gathering, it is much easier to start a discussion on the merits of the latest book off the press, or some musical composition, or even the correct way in which to play a certain hand at auction bridge than to introduce such subjects as politics or economics. Indeed it is somewhat amusing to note the brevity and conciseness with which these threadworn and annoying subjects are dismissed as something too thoroughly understood to be of interest. One has well said that, if you wished to estimate the number of writers in Victoria, you have only to count the names in the telephone directory, and, extravagant as the idea may appear, it is in very truth not so wide of the mark.

What can the average Canadian citizen make of a city where Wednesday and Saturday afternoon half-holidays are observed all year round, where big business and manufacturing are unsought, if not actually frowned on, and where the business outlook is that of a tourist pleasure resort?

We have been regaled over the past year with articles appearing in that prominent Canadian magazine, Maclean's, extolling in loud tones the virtues and advantages of our principal Canadian cities, and alas, also too frequently disclosing their rivalries and jealousies. Jealous of other Canadian cities — Victoria? The idea is too absurd for discussion. Of course, in the very order of things, two such closely situated cities as Victoria and Vancouver could not get along without a certain amount of good-natured banter, to lend some spice to life, but neither Vancouver nor any other highly-charged, energetic, commercial Canadian city can hope to understand the viewpoint of our leisurely, complacent Victorians, whose only concern is to forget the feverish scampering hither and thither in pursuit of the

elusive dollar and to really live in the relaxing enjoyment of those mental and physical recreations to which we have looked forward so eagerly over the strenuous years.

Snobbery? Not a bit of it: Vancouver good-natured raillery notwithstanding. I have met men in many cities, who counted their money in the millions, some of them unfortunately not overly well educated, and who in consequence held an exaggerated opinion of their value. Here there are some who may be in the wealthy class. Seek out one of them and you will most likely meet a man out on a hike, accompanied by his dog and his favorite pipe, clad in a worn golf suit, with battered hat and good old comfortable brogues, as entirely indifferent to appearances as an Irish washerwoman. Speak to him and you will find him affable and amiable. Question him and you will find him a veritable bureau of information.

Possibly the chief regret felt here is that the Provincial University is not located at so ideal a spot, to add to the literary charm of the community, although science is well represented by the presence of two of the most noted observatories on the continent, the Dominion astronomical and astro-physical buildings. We are also blessed with a successful college, of our own and magnificent Parliament Buildings, containing a splendid museum and an unusually well-equipped library.

A glance at the map of Canada shows Victoria as located well south of the international boundary of the 49th parallel of latitude, so that it need not occasion surprise to learn that peaches, plums, pears, cherries, grapes and all manner of small fruits ripen in abundance, and even figs, at the Dominion Government Experimental Farm, have borne fully ripened fruit over many years. As the writer pens, or rather typewrites, this article, in the month of December, he can look out on a rock-garden in which

roses and at least twenty other varieties of flowers are in full bloom. The low-lying sea level, some seven hundred to a thousand feet below the prairie section, and the great tides that sweep past the location of the city through the Strait of Juan de Fuca, keep the climate one of the most even on the face of the globe, ranging almost uniformly throughout the entire year within ten degrees of fifty above zero.

Naval officers, familiar with ports the world over, state unequivocally that the entrance to Victoria Harbor from the Pacific is the most magnificent in the world, and it is indeed truly awe-inspiring. On the right are the stupendous ice-clad peaks of the rugged Olympics, beyond which stands out in solitary grandeur the snow-white form of Mount Baker, one of the most marvellous peaks I have ever seen, standing entirely isolated from the distant background of lesser heights. It resembles more some clear-cut ethereal diamond than anything formed from earthly substance.

A motor run of some ten miles through orchard valleys and around circling hills clad in arbutus, dogwood and the giant Douglas firs, brings us to the famed Butchart Gardens. These were formerly immense excavations among the rocks, formed by the operations of a cement plant. When big business, in the form of the British Columbia Cement Company, took over the property and removed the machinery to a more convenient location, Mrs. R. P. Butchart, with unlimited resources at her command, conceived the idea of beautifying the grounds by the cultivation of rare shrubs and flowers. Plants gathered from every corner of the earth, over years of extensive travel, have turned the naturally beautiful location into bowers of such loveliness as to attract visitors from distant lands.

The unfailing courtesy of the owners, who keep the gardens open to the inspection of the public, affords an unfailing delight to hundreds of visitors

who daily throng the shaded walks to revel in the abundance of lawns, lily-pools and flowers.

Another attractive motor route sweeps around the southerly shores of Saanich Arm by way of the Malahat Drive, rising some two thousand feet above the sea. Saanich Arm is an off-shoot of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, cutting in on the east shore of Vancouver Island in a southwesterly direction for some thirty miles and forming the Saanich Peninsula. It terminates in Brentwood Bay, the sheltered waters of which are covered daily throughout the year by sporting fisher craft, ranging from the modest rowboat to the sumptuous yacht, all occupied by keen anglers engaged in the fascinating lure of trolling for salmon.

The usual method in fishing for Spring salmon in a sporting way is to use from four hundred to a thousand feet of steel wire or fine silk line, as the fish are usually found near the bottom of the deep bay. Near the hook is attached to a "trip" any piece of useless metal weighing from one to two pounds for the purpose of carrying the troll to the required depth. Immediately the fish strikes, the weight is released by the trip and the fish is off on a free line to be played in a proper sporting manner. And what a thrill it is when the scream of the spinning reel and the furious jerking of the light swaying rod brings the sporty fighter to the surface in a great flash of silver as he leaps high in the air and dashes himself against the water in efforts to dislodge the obnoxious hook. Then the long, tense struggle, lasting from ten to thirty minutes, when every art of the crafty angler is pitted against the instinct of the wily salmon, until the great silver beauty, weighing anywhere from ten to fifty pounds, is safely gaffed and brought aboard.

Of course, this refers to the Spring salmon. Cohoes, around six to ten pounds, and the smaller grilse are the commoner prey, and not always prey,

for they have a tantalizing habit, as often as not, of ending the struggle in a suddenly slackened line and a sickening feeling at the pit of the stomach, when we realize that our quarry has gotten safely away, too often accompanied, alas, by a valuable part of our tackle.

But our sporting blood had almost made us forget the Malahat Drive, which we had been attempting to describe. It winds along the hillsides overlooking Brentwood Bay and Saanich Arm, cut from rugged overhanging rocks over the old Indian "Malahat," or high trail, which is its equivalent in our English tongue. Every turn brings into view a new breathtaking panorama of wooded valleys, tumbling foamy streams, hillside orchards and distant isles and mountains viewed across the wide expanse of sea-green waters. The celebrated Goldstream River is crossed at several points.

It is in reality only a small mountain stream, almost vanishing during the Summer months, but occasionally a raging little torrent, whose banks are strewn with dead salmon, thrust out of the water by millions of their fellows, that fill the stream and overflow its banks in their mad rush to reach the spawning grounds.

Following the line of the coast northward on the east side of the Island, is a continuous succession of small islands and protected channels, which afford a pleasant change of view to the tourist. One of the first to be met is San Juan Island, over which raged so fierce a controversy as to bring Great Britain and the United States to the verge of war. It lies so close as to be scarcely distinguishable from Vancouver Island itself, while the shores of the United States, to whom it was finally awarded, would be out of range of vision were it not for the mountain ranges that outline their contour.

Mount Arrowsmith, the highest peak on Vancouver Island, is only some 6,300 feet in height, yet the

whole island is of rocky formation, so that the motoring roads are built on a permanent basis. They branch northward from Victoria, following the coast lines past many sheltered bays and bathing beaches and into the interior, where they circle round many gem-like little lakes. These, in the usual fashion in mountainous country, lie sheltered at the feet of towering, fir-clad hills. They are all of that clear, mirror-like variety in which the reflection of the hills appears as sharply defined as in the originals. Invariably appears the straggling coast village of bungalows and Summer cottages, with the inevitable tea rooms, dance halls and tennis courts, while the bays are covered with pleasure boats of every variety imaginable. Here you will quickly become accustomed to meeting your acquaintances clad in meagre bathing suits, as you will rarely see them in street costume.

In Victoria itself two of the principal pleasure resorts are the Crystal Garden, a palatial glass-enclosed swimming pool operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and Beacon Hill Park, owned by the city. The former is the rendezvous for expert divers and swimmers, although little tots, scarcely able to toddle, are seen, as much at home in the water as young seals. Beacon Hill Park is best remembered by its much-advertised swan pool, where not only numerous black and white swans, but numberless ducks disport themselves. It has beautifully shaded avenues under giant chestnut trees, but its principal charm is in its extensive rock-gardens, where are piled up in rich profusion massed banks of brightly colored flowers. It borders on the ocean driveway with a magnificent view of the Olympic mountains directly across the channel, and during the Spring months the yellow of Scottish gorse and broom clothes it in a rich mantle of burnished gold as far as the eye can range.

Victoria, due to its location, is the natural port of entry from the Orient, and as a consequence, its

harbor is crowded with vessels of every description from the palatial liner and the grim warship to the fussy tugs and humble coal barges, all of which gives it an appearance of great animation. Around the Inner Harbor are grouped the most imposing buildings in the city, the Parliament Buildings and museum, the Canadian Pacific Railway Depot and Empress Hotel, one of the largest and most beautifully designed of their many fine hostelryes, the post office, the Union Club and several large business blocks. In front is a broad esplanade flanked by the wide-spreading lawns of the Parliament Buildings and the hotel, the whole creating a most favorable impression on the incoming traveller, which, if anything, is heightened when the beautiful situation of the city is more fully realized.

The city is surrounded by some ten small bays, one of which, Shoal Bay, is an exact replica of the Bay of Naples, minus the forbidding pall of smoke from Mount Vesuvius, while an arm of the ocean, the Gorge, intersects for several miles the naval section of Esquimalt. Here is located one of the largest drydocks on the Pacific and an important military establishment, the latter lending much color and life to the social activities of the city.

Here flourish the dogwood, arbutus, May tree, magnolia and every form of flowering shrub imaginable, and when hills and valleys are covered with the rich gold of gorse and broom, the language of words fails utterly to picture the charm of this city of flowers, where the views from the hilltops some seven to eight hundred feet above the rolling lands, takes in one succession of flowering gardens and orchards in this the most lovely of all our Canadian cities.



The Malahat Drive

THE MALAHAT

At early dawn we wound our way
Beyond the marge of Brentwood Bay,
Through stately aisles of cedars tall,
A starlit arched cathedral,
And caught through latticed fern and pine
Faint glimmerings of the pale moonshine.

Now as the rays of morn appear
We stand above the shimmering mere,
And view with wide encircling glance
The heralds of the dawn advance.
Blazoned in bands of green and gold
Their radiant banners they unfold.

At times the carefree hand of God
Flings beauty on the winds abroad.
He paints in gold the lavish hills,
With silver strews the sparkling rills.
And where the ice-capped summits rise
Sets steel-blue diamonds in the skies.

O devotees of beauty, kneel
Within this shrine your vows to seal.
This is her temple, here the fane
Where Aphrodite and her train
A new Idalian altar raise
For service of her votaries.

O come with joyous song and prayer,
Come bring your gifts and offerings rare,
Pour out libations of the wine,
Your garlands intricate entwine.
With incense sweet and odorous spice
Renew the ancient sacrifice.

Here dwell who love the leafy bowers,
Here Flora spills her fairest flowers
By mountains, valleys, hills and leas.
Evangelists of the unveiled eyes
Come to your new Arcadian home—
Come, devotees of Beauty, come.



Malahat Scenic Outlook

STRAIT OF JUAN DE FUCA

Here on this lofty hill we turn to view

The long green waste of waters as they roar
In tidal floods the swollen channels through

From where Cape Flattery rears her misty shore
To where the golden bands of gorse and broom
Bind round Victoria's brow their queenly bloom.

No lovelier scene or vista could command

The soul to spurn the sordid things of earth;
Nor wings of inspiration need be fanned,

Nor wide imagination given birth,
As the dilated orb roams raptured here
O'er mountain, valley, seas and skyway clear.

Juan de Fuca, when upon this height

You, first of men, didst view the glorious scene,
How must your soul have soared beyond the flight

Of mortal vision, as there rolled between
You and yon steeps this portal to a world
O'er which your country's flag you here unfurled.

This loveliest of cities, laurel crowned,

Of sheltered bays and inlets green and blue.
Even here thy longed-for haven may be found,

Even here, thy earthly pilgrimages through,
Mayhap thy bold adventurous spirit still
Goes wandering by each leafy vale and hill.

Strange phantom ships sink in the glowing west,

Where the sun spills its splendor on the sea,
Couriers of the vasty deep on eager quest,

Seeking those age-old lands of mystery.
Following the vision of their heart's desire,
Our spirits are consumed with secret fire.

Eastward in stately grandeur riseth high

Mount Baker's spires and white cathedral dome,
Whose dazzling shafts of light out-pierce the sky

High o'er her sloping flanks of cloudy foam—

A god-like miracle of grace and form
Loosed from the bounds of earthly time and storm.

Rose-tinted by the sunbeams' dying rays,
Tier upon tier of icy pinnacles,
The bold Olympics rise to meet the gaze
Until the watcher, won to worship, thrills,
And filled with reverent awe proclaims the hour
When the Creator first revealed His power.

Dear Straits of Fuca, great armadas ride
Thy billowy foam, but in my thoughts of thee
Forevermore a memory shall abide,
Not only of the mountains and the sea,
But those exalted moments when the soul
Winged upward near its spiritual goal.



The Rose Bower, Mr. Butchart's Gardens

BUTCHART'S GARDENS

Soft scenes of beauty, circled by the hills,
Whose winding paths and sheltered vales are strewn
With fabled flowers caught from many climes,
And earth's most treasured gardens; how you thrill
The raptured senses with your odorous blooms,
Mixed with the tang of the great piney woods
And salt-sea waters. Haunts of old Cathay,
The hanging bowers of ancient Babylon,
The lotus-laden waters of the Nile
And orchids from the islands of the seas,
Whose perfumes drift upon the adoring airs,
Live once again within this miniature
Garden of Allah, new-world Taj Mahal.

O what a place for lovers this would be!
To loiter in the shadow of the pines
And dream moon-dreams, and pass those idle words
That hide the deep emotion of the soul.

Come near, my love, and we will pause to see
How sweet is silence in the haunts of eve,
How sweet the light within the glowing eyes,
The gentle pressure of the lingering hand,
Breath-taking brushing of the passing lips,
Ere the full flavor of delirious joy
Has ripened in the maddening wine of love.
Here love will circle round us like a dove
With swiftly-beating heart and fluttering wings,
That hovers round the safely hidden cote,
Circles afar, returns with sudden sweep
To flutter forth again, circles more near,
Until at last it lights within the bower,
A perfect dream of pure white loveliness.

We linger o'er each blossom mythical,
Each scented spray of unknown glamorous tree,
Turning again and yet again to view
The wealth of flowing lawns and shady bowers,
Until the day is spent and twilight's glow
Has gilded all the mountain tops with gold,
And the deep crimson on the western clouds
Has passed into the silence of the night.

DOUGLAS FIR

With gnarled talons, grasping firm the rock,
He lifts his feathery plumes into the skies,
A mighty frame, nor time nor storm can shock,
Companion of the ceaseless centuries.
The monarch of the forest reigns supreme,
Lord of the vast expanse of hill and stream.

Four hundred years ago, one Summer noon,
A vision came from out the sunny south,
Unknown, unheralded of ancient days—
A wondrous swan came swimming into view,
Spreading her snow-white wings to woo the breeze.
A tremor ran through all his startled frame,
Presaging ruin. Round her gleaming sides
Strange lightnings played. The sullen roar

Of muffled thunder smote the quiet air,
And peace and silence were forever slain.

He saw his brothers, smitten by the axe,
Stagger and reel, and crash upon the rocks
In fearful pangs of deathly agony.
His lovely vales and soft green verdant hills
Lay disembowelled by the furious spade.
The silvery streams, sweet minstrels of the wold,
That sang throughout the silence of the night
To the slow-wandering stars and radiant moon,
Lay bound within their hard confining beds,
To toil and labor through the loathsome nights
And long-drawn weary days. The birch canoe,
That crept so silently from shore to shore,
Has passed forever from his eager gaze.
His stately Indian, clothed in rags of shame,
Bows to the cruel customs of the world.

And now he stands, a lonely sentinel,
The west-wind sighs amid his wasted limbs,
Shorn of their strength and soft green loveliness.
A cry comes up from out the moaning sea,
Calling him to his doom, 'til, stripped and bare,
He stands full-bound upon the barren deck
To bear the wings of those strange sombre birds
Across the dismal waste of alien seas,
A monarch bound to ceaseless slavery;
Yet in whose rugged strength and regal mien
Still stirs the splendor of his island home.

DAWN ON OAK BAY

The dawn comes creeping over the sea,
The lovely wide mysterious sea,
And the little islands across the bay
Come drifting out of the shadows grey.
Like giant turtles they seem to glide,
Their green snouts breaking the rising tide.

As the first faint beams of the coming day
Are chasing the paling stars away,
Black silhouettes of the mountains rise
Against the glow in the eastern skies,
Gaunt mythical monsters, jagged and grim
As the dragons that sport in a Dante's whim.

Now suddenly riseth the brilliant rays
Of the golden sun on the eager gaze,
Deep rosy-red on the fading mist,
And the million lips of the waves are kissed
'Til they blush and quiver in amorous glee.
O the dawn of day is sweet at sea.

At times and oft in the morning light,
We have trolled for salmon beyond the bight,
And needed two pairs of eyes to keep
Watch on the reel and the changing deep,
As we pitied the slumberer in his bed
Missing the glory overhead.

MOUNT BAKER

Beyond the shimmering eastern light
Mount Baker's spires of stainless white.

* * *

Across the distant and translucent blue
A stainless shaft of white its crest uprears,
Piercing the startled heavens—beautiful.

As some pure fleecy cloud that from the storm
Scales upward to the clear and glorious skies,
Its glittering snows surmount the rolling range
Of lesser heights—a thing apart and calm.

Ethereal as an evanescent dream
It stands serenely luminous, its spires,
Almost unearthly in their dazzling light,
An opalescent splendor in the sun.

And now within the veil, that for a space
Opened its flowing mantle to reveal
God's glory in the matchless firmament,
It slow withdraws into the curtained clouds.

A while we stand entranced, amazed, enthralled
By the gone wonder, overcome with awe,
Then deep within the heart a sudden faith
Rises triumphant from the lesser shades
Of spiritual longing, aye and aye,
God's image in the flaming universe,
God's presence in the everlasting soul.

THE OLYMPICS

Across the vast expanse of sunlit sea
The snow-clad summits soar beyond the skies—
Great giant diamonds glowing in the sun.
Serene within the spacious vault of heaven,
They hold communion with the wandering stars.

Far down beneath, the floating silver clouds
Infold their sloping flanks in fleecy veils
Of drifting, foamy mist. Words seem to shrink
And lose their skill in efforts to portray
The awful grandeur of these dazzling heights.

Ere day had been divided from the night,
Beyond the tidal years, ere time began
Their summits caught the vagrant wandering light
Of new-made stars. Here at their watery base
The mighty dinosaur and mastodon
Their dreadful combat joined in brutal strife.
With shrill and savage scream the winged bat—
The fierce triceratop of lizard form
Battled the clumsy plesiosaurus.
The crude young world was bathed in streams of
blood.

The days were drawn into the flowing years.
The years crept on to circling centuries.
Ages and eras passed, eons had fled
Ere in the latter day frail man evolved
Slowly from out the serpent and the slime.
These lofty pinnacles looked down in scorn
To see the puny pigmies at their toil.
Still through the crowding centuries to come,
High o'er the storms and tumult of the world,
These crystal jewels set within the skies,
In awful pride and silent majesty
Shall bathe their images in glassy seas.

When ages cease and time shall have an end,
When frozen oceans and the barren earth
Shall feel no more within their shrunken veins
The cold rays of the waste and dying sun,
These rocky ribs and icy barriers
Shall straight re-echo back the strident sound
Of Gabriel's clarion trumpet and the shout
Of hosts arising from the crowded tomb
Of countless ages; these to their reckoning;
Some few perchance on strong exultant wing
Shall circle round the everlasting throne
And hymn the triumph of the spirit throng.

But not the bounds of hell, the heights of heaven,
Nor all the starry orbs that sweep the skies
Shall in their widest vision scarce conceive
Glories more lovely than these gems of God,
Set here within this circle of the seas,
To fill the soul with worship and with prayer.

THE COMRADE SEA

All day I paced beside the restless sea,
And heard the water moaning on the bar,
The long, green billows breaking on the shore,
And sensed the kindred sea's companionship.

A storm had broken on my heart, and on
The vasty deep a mighty tempest raged.
Great Triton's horn came sounding from afar,
Mixed with the clamor of the elements.
The thunderous music broke upon my soul
And I was comforted. O comrade sea!
O mother heart, whose tidal pulses beat
In evermore unchanging ebb and flow!
Forever varying are thy human moods—
The passion and the tumult of the storm,
The folding mists that hide the beacon gleam,
The golden sunlight as a burnished shield
In far-off splendor on the rippling tide,
And when the full-orbed moon with shining face
Peeps once above the circle of the world
And gilds thy face with silver radiancy,
'Tis then, O joyous sea, I love thee most!
'Tis then on quivering nerve and wearied brain
Is poured the soothing solace of thy wine.

The graceful gull sinks to her quiet rest,
The stormy petrel pillows on thy breast,
And on the pebbly beaches sweet and long
Crooneth the gentle murmur of thy song.

All day I walked beside the restful sea.

LAKE SHAWNIGAN

Amid the pines the deep clear waters lave
The smooth worn shingle and the granite rocks,
And in the softening gloom the shadows grave
The far-off shore in misty light, that mocks
The eager gaze, whose raptured orbits span
Beauty's keen grace on wild, sweet Shawnigan.

O vestal mirror of the shrouded hills!
Within thy chaste and virgin bosom lies
All swift forgetfulness of human ills,
Of worldly tumult and anxieties.
Forever doth thy pure and placid form
Absolve the sun's keen rays, the furious storm.

A spirit moves across thy slumbering breast.
The subtle muse of mystery and song
Within thy fir-clad groves shall find a rest,
And soar aloft on spreading pinions, strong
With pent desire, inspired with sudden zeal
Thy sacred rites and sagas to reveal.

The Indian lore that old Maquinna sang
In those heroic days of savage strife
Still haunts thee with its agonizing pang
Of reeking tomahawk and scalping-knife,
And in the ghostly visions of the night
Strange forms and phantoms float before thy sight.

The visions fade, the treasured memories pass,
The birch canoe and totem pole are gone,
And thou beholdest them as in a glass,
Yet still thy tranquil loveliness goes on,
And Beauty's devotees, with offerings rare,
Attend thy shrine with loving vow and prayer.

THE CASCADES

(Mountain Range)

Abrupt in rugged grandeur do they rise,
Huge granite forts, built in a giant age,
Whose rocky turrets, reaching to the skies,
And icy pinnacles with tempests wage
Perpetual warfare. From each high retort
They hurl their avalanchine terrors down
On the advancing foes, who seem to court
Their dire destruction. With terrific frown
The clouds rain down their showers of sleet and hail,
And lightnings sear the ranks with savage breath.
Ghastly and wan and luminously pale
The broken fields are covered thick with death.

High o'er the shattered ranks of crimson dead
The fearful thunders roar their challenge out
From snowy crest and icy steel-capped head,
Where cedar hosts with banner and with shout
And serried spears have made their swift ascent.
Rank upon rank they rise to the attack,
And some have scaled the utmost battlement,
And some in hideous rout are driven back.

Although the mammoth builders long are gone,
From age to age the ceaseless strife goes on.

Yet have they learned the music of the spheres,
The murmurous tones of liquid melody,
The rapture of a presence that endears
Itself in dewy gem or moonlit sea,
And those majestic orbs that ever roll
Through tideless space to their uncharted goal.

And still they have some subtle sense to feel
The breathing of the rose, to catch the strain
Of Pan's still reedy piping and to steal
The rapture of the meadow-lark's refrain,
The gentle murmur of the mountain stream,
The hum of argosies of golden bees,
The moaning of the ocean's distant dream,
The whisper of the wind among the trees.

These crystal Cascades, old and wise and strong,
Have blent their echoes in one glorious song.

TWILIGHT ON GONZALES HILL

I stood alone upon a lofty hill.

The great sea rolled in thunder at its feet.
My very heart for ecstasy stood still,
Gazing afar where winds and waters meet,
To see the glories of the dying sun
Blazing a pathway to his last retreat.

Around me sailed the silver gulls and swayed
In graceful curves, wide circling one by one.
Adown the pebbly beach the children played,
Their day's short dream of rapture nearly done.
Jove's golden shield a moment hung in space,
Then dipped its mailed crescent and was gone.

Far upward flamed the purple clouds, and smote
The darkening sky with swiftly crimson ray.
I heard far off a lark's clear pearly note
Piercing the stilly silence with its lay
Of throbbing gladness; watched the stately crows
In serried columns wing their homeward way.

And now I caught the twinkling of a star
Beyond a black-hulled boat, that drifting slow,
Beckoned me on to alien lands afar,
To those mysterious isles the sea-mews know,
Where mermaids sport among the coral groves,
And nymphs and piping Pans a-maying go.

* * *

The solemn moon came slowly marching on,
Gliding above a lofty mountain crest.
The loveliest hour in all the day was gone
As evening slipped away into the west.



Saanich Inlet

VANCOUVER ISLAND

We had played golf over them all, Oak Bay, The Vale, Macauley, Cedar Hill and Colwood, the faultless "Queen of the Coast," and had returned to the intricacies of our first love, The Uplands.

The days had been bright and sunny, but somehow the clouds had always hung in the wrong places and we had only obtained a hazy glimpse of the Olympics and had not had a sight of Mount Baker. We had enquired as to its exact location, when our companion in landscape gardening exclaimed, "Why, there it is now," and looking eastward we beheld it in all its bewildering glory emerging from a mass of fleecy white clouds. There it hung in the heavens, more like some clear ethereal diamond than anything made up of earthly substance.

Somehow we imagine that Victorians, accustomed as they are to the sight of so many beauty spots, do

not appreciate to the full the unusual splendor of Mount Baker and the Olympics.

Approaching the mountain ranges from the prairies, with the exception of unusually clear days, the effect of their majesty is diminished by the gradual ascent until the traveller, arriving at their base, finds himself many hundreds of feet above sea level, which naturally detracts from the appearance of height and the awe inspired by their great summits.

Here, however, they are viewed across the expanse of ocean and are seen in all the abrupt ruggedness of their grandeur. A word picture fails utterly to portray the delicate variation of light and shade that sweeps across the expanse of sea and the exquisite tinting that shines through the clouds and is reflected in ever-changing colors against the sombre background of the huge mountain ranges.

Before coming west we had taken a motor run as far east as Quebec City. The views from the citadel in this historic site and from Parliament Hill at Ottawa cannot be forgotten, nor the delightful run from Ottawa to Montreal, where the constant succession of lakes and rapids with the range of the Laurentians in the background makes one continuous delight.

We retain a vivid recollection of the beauties of the Thousand Islands, the mighty St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, the soft luxuriant foliage of our own prairies, the desolate salt-lake districts of Montana, the towering pinnacles of the Rockies and the weird primeval appearance of the Grand Canyon, where we almost expected to catch sight of some gigantic dinosaur crashing its way across the stark chalky gorges.

None of these wonderful sights can, however, quite compare with the wide expanse of ocean and mountain range as viewed from the hilltops of Victoria, with the exception of Niagara Falls and its absorbing whirlpool, which, of course, make up one of the wonders of the world. Here again, the effect

is rather a numbing of the faculties from the dread and overpowering sense of awe, and as we witnessed passengers returning from the basket trip over the rapids with white tense faces and suffering from extreme nausea, we felt that the act was being overplayed and much of the pleasure counteracted by the nervous tension involved.

Very different is the sensation caused by the appearance of Mount Baker or the Olympics on a clear day as viewed from Gonzales or Denison Hill. The surrounding panorama of hill and dale, of forest and orchard, with the city of flowers surrounded and enriched by its numerous sheltered bays, is one of unalloyed delight.

When the eye then sweeps outward from this soft vision across the wide expanse of ocean to the clear crystal snow-clad peaks, it is in very truth a dull and clod-bound soul that does not feel a thrill of inspiration and an irresistible longing to mount on eagle wings above the petty and sordid ills to which this weak flesh is heir.

Even now the sun has broken through the western clouds and the whole wide horizon of the ocean flames up into a golden molten mass of rippling, dazzling light that beggars description, and we can only stand and gaze in rapture on the brilliant panorama.

A few days ago we were told by a chance acquaintance, who had been here some thirty years, that we would soon tire of scenery and views and appreciate more the material comforts of life. Well, we are not overly anxious to stick around for another thirty years in any event, and if we find our faculties failing to a point where we cannot get a thrill out of loveliness such as we view on the Island from day to day, then, indeed, *sic tempus oberunt*.

Somehow, in our delight in the beauty spots of the Island we invariably come to a point where mere prose fails us and we feel like breaking into song, or what is nearly as serious, into descriptive verse:—

For life flows on like a passing stream,
And the days go by in a dream, a dream.

A land of lovely vales and rugged hills
Clothed in the softening verdure of the pine,
Of tranquil lakes and gently murmuring rills
Bathed in the light of tender skies benign:

Where stately ships sweep inward from the sea,
And fisher fleets drift idling on the bay,
A very faerieland of Arcadie
In which to dream the drowsy hours away:

This bower of Eden, this fair paradise,
Where roses soft festoon each leafy dale,
Here circling larks sing to the balmiest skies
Their haunting and melodious madrigal.

The strident world goes by with feverish speed.
From peak to peak the swelling trumpets sound.
In ivy-laden bowers we list, nor heed
The trampling hosts that tread th' expectant
ground.

Here rest in sweet contentment, oh my soul.
Here beauty dwells in flowering bud and tree.
A new aroma fills the inspiring bowl
In this fair island of the western sea.



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